

From: Tom and Naomi George
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 7:14pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Renata B. Hesse,

I think the proposed Microsoft settlement is a bad idea. As a linux user and a windows user I am concerned that the settlement does not sufficiently redress the fact that Microsoft has used both restrictive licenses and intentional incompatibilities to discourage users from running Windows applications on Windows-compatible competing operating systems. I am an independent scholar and my field of expertise is not computer science, but I depend on my computer system to give me secure and reliable operations. I can no longer depend on Windows alone to accomplish this. One of my main concerns has to do with future compatibility of new documents and archives of documents. Many Microsoft documents are specific to windows and cannot be opened under other systems. Worse, developers who wish to create portable systems cannot even be assured they will receive information needed to develop those systems because no part of the PFJ obligates Microsoft to release any information about file formats, even though undocumented Microsoft file formats form part of the Applications Barrier to Entry. Moreover, information would almost certainly not be released in time for competing middleware vendors to adapt their products to meet the requirements of section III.H.3, which states that competing middleware can be locked out if it fails to meet unspecified technical requirements seven months before the final beta test of a new version of Windows.

Thanks,

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